

Week Ending Friday, December 6, 1996

**The President's Radio Address**

*November 30, 1996*

Good morning. This week, millions of American families gathered around their dinner tables to enjoy our annual feast of Thanksgiving. Now many of us who traveled great distances to be with loved ones are making the trip back home.

Today I want to talk about how we can extend the spirit of Thanksgiving beyond this holiday weekend. Thanksgiving is our oldest tradition. In 1789, George Washington made Thanksgiving his first proclamation for our new Nation. Much has changed for America in the two centuries since that first proclamation. Today we not only feed ourselves well, our bounty helps to feed the world. The light of freedom that drew founders to our shores not only shines here. For the first time in history, more than half the world's people who once lived in the shadows of tyranny and depression now live under governments of their own choosing.

On this year's Thanksgiving, we are reminded that we are a nation truly blessed. Crime and poverty are down. Employment is up. We are a nation at peace. For the most part, foods and jobs are plentiful. Our children have more to look forward to than any generation of young people in human history.

But as President Lincoln once so powerfully reminded us, this country cannot afford to be materially rich and spiritually poor. That perhaps is the greatest lesson of Thanksgiving. For more than any other holiday, it reminds us of the importance of family and community and the duty we owe to each other. I want to thank those across our Nation who donated food or volunteered time to provide a Thanksgiving meal for those among us who are homeless and hungry.

Unfortunately, hunger and homelessness don't take a holiday; they are with us all year long. So we must not wait until Thanksgiving to reach out to those in need. And we must

not pack our compassion back in the cupboard like fine china that only gets used once a year.

The spirit of family and faith and community that shines so brilliantly on Thanksgiving can enable us to meet every challenge before us all year long. So let us resolve to go forward together to lift millions of people from welfare and dependency into lives of dignity and independence. Now that we have ended welfare as we know it, let the change not be to have even more children in more abject poverty but to move people who can work into jobs.

Let us pledge to give our children the best education in the world and the support they need to build strong futures, higher standards in our schools, more choices, and the opportunity for all Americans to go on to college.

Let us work together to keep our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools free from the ravages of crime and drugs and violence, finishing the job of putting 100,000 police on our streets, targeting violent teen gangs, and doing more at the grassroots level to turn our children from drugs and gangs and guns and violence.

And let us always remember that when America is united, we always win, but when we're divided, we defeat ourselves.

In the global economy of the 21st century, the marvelous diversity of America will be a great blessing if we all treat each other with dignity and respect and remember we don't have a person to waste.

Whenever I travel around the world, as I did last week, I always return home with a renewed appreciation for the rich blessings so many of us take for granted. And while we should be thankful that technology and cultural exchanges are bringing much of the world closer together, it is also clear that people all over the globe still look to America for moral leadership.

As Hillary reminded us last weekend when she visited a project to assist young women struggling in Thailand, we do have a responsibility to help build lives of hope and security for suffering children not only here in America but all over the world. That is what we have tried to do in Bosnia, in Haiti, in working for peace in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, in so many of our efforts all around the globe.

Let me close today with a personal note of thanks to every one of you for affording me the opportunity to continue my service as President. For the past 4 years I've worked hard to stand up for our values as a nation and to give all our citizens the tools to make the most of their own lives. And we've come a long way together, but there is still much, much more to do. And we know that the only way we can succeed is if we all work together.

So let us all be guided, as I try to be guided every day, by the words of the Scripture which teaches that, "to those to whom much is given, much is required." So, as we set our sights on a joyous holiday season, let us all pledge by our devotion to God and family and community to keep the spirit of Thanksgiving alive all year long.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from Camp David, MD.

### **Proclamation 6960—National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, 1996**

*November 27, 1996*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is a scourge on our society that we cannot ignore or treat lightly. Drunk and drugged driving has no geographic limits; it is a problem that afflicts cities and rural areas alike in every region of our country. And, most disturbing of all, it is a growing problem—last year, alcohol-related traffic deaths increased for the first time in a decade. Each of us and our loved ones are at risk of becoming victims of a driver impaired by drugs or

alcohol. However, we can solve this problem if we make a national commitment to do so.

Two months ago, we charted a course that demands that those who drive must assume the responsibility of staying sober and drug-free behind the wheel. Targeting our youngest drivers first, we began by requiring, as a condition of receiving Federal highway funds, that every State pass a law making it illegal for anyone under 21 to drive with alcohol in their bloodstream.

Now, we must take the next step toward ridding our highways of drunk drivers.

Drivers between 21 and 34 years of age are most likely to drive under the influence of alcohol or other mind-altering drugs. We must not only redouble our efforts to educate those in this age group about the terrible risks posed by drunk and drugged driving, but we must also strengthen our law enforcement efforts to make clear that this behavior will not be tolerated.

Addressing impaired driving by teens and young adults is important but, unfortunately, is not enough to solve the problem. No age group is immune to the temptation to drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Through peer pressure and education, we must convince all who would get behind the wheel drunk or drugged to change their behavior.

All of us can do our part to reduce the tragic loss of life and limb caused by drunk and drugged drivers. Parents can thoughtfully and candidly discuss the dangers with their children who drive; more States can pass Zero Tolerance laws; more citizens can prevent friends or acquaintances from getting behind the wheel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol; and more of us can volunteer to be "designated drivers," pledged to abstain from alcohol when we are with others who might be drinking. By making clear that drunk and drugged driving is unacceptable and by resolving firmly to stop it, we can prevent thousands of tragic deaths and injuries each year.

I ask all Americans to observe a special day of remembrance of the victims of drunk and drugged driving by participating this year in "National Lights on for Life Day." On Friday, December 20, I ask that drivers nationwide keep their headlights illuminated to call